

BOOK REVIEWS

FUNDAMENTALS OF CLINICAL FLUOROSCOPY — With Essentials of Roentgen Interpretation. By Charles B. Storch, M.D., Adjunct, Radiodiagnostic Department and Radiotherapy Department, Beth-El Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1951. 196 pages. \$6.75.

The stated purpose of this monograph is to "give the basic knowledge, indicate capacity and limitations, and make the actual learning process easier." In a group of six chapters the author takes you through the mechanics of production of the fluoroscopic image, the dangers of roentgenoscopy and the importance of adequate dark adaptation. Next come chapters on fluoroscopic examination of the chest, the heart, the upper alimentary tract, the stomach and finally the colon.

Most of the illustrations are good, but in order to indicate anatomic relationships, they are drawn as they would appear on a fully illuminated fluoroscopic screen. No experienced physician interested in his own or his patient's bone marrow will use a fully illuminated large fluoroscopic screen for more than a fraction of a second. This point cannot be overstressed, and it might be desirable for subsequent editions of the book to illustrate just the diagrams and omit the outline of the fully irradiated fluoroscopic screen.

The author is assistant radiologist at the Beth-El Hospital, New York, and a graduate of Edinburgh. The manual can be recommended for students and beginners in fluoroscopy, and if properly studied, will undoubtedly make the learning process easier. However, since fluoroscopic examination is only part of the roentgen examination of most of the viscera discussed, it is to be questioned whether the manual will really serve the purpose of improving the quality of diagnostic radiology.

The vast majority of the illustrations are from roentgenograms, not from photofluorograms or films made with the fluoroscope. They may, therefore, lead the uninitiated into excessive reliance on fluoroscopy alone.

The author indicates, but does not stress with adequate frequency, the important point that "The time to make the roentgenogram is when the fluoroscopic appearance is negative." If this important dictum were followed, more small and curable lesions would unquestionably be detected.

There are 217 illustrations and a fairly adequate bibliography.

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AMINO ACIDS AND PROTEINS—Theory, Methods and Application. Compiled and Edited by David M. Greenberg, Ph.D., Professor of Biochemistry and Chairman of the Division, University of California School of Medicine, Berkeley, California. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Illinois, 1951. 950 pages. \$15.00.

This collaborative project by a group of outstanding contributors under the direction of Professor David Greenberg reviews in concise but complete form the broad field of the amino acids and proteins. The first four chapters concern properties of amino acids and methods for their determination. Subsequent chapters cover nutritional applications and metabolism. The remainder of the book describes the chemistry, physical properties, and biological importance of the proteins. To compress such an enormous subject into a book of reasonable size, some subjects are covered only in outline, supplemented by an extensive bibliography. This volume should serve as a useful and readable source of concise information for the advanced student or investigator, and as a valuable source of references to the extensive literature of the field. The physician might find much of the subject matter somewhat technical in nature, but the volume should prove useful as a reference work.

NATURAL CHILDBIRTH — A Manual for Expectant Parents. By Frederick W. Goodrich, Jr., M.D. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1950. 176 pages. \$2.95.

This book contains information which every expectant mother and father should acquire. It combines the usual prenatal information and instructions regarding the hygiene of pregnancy with the pertinent anatomical and physiological facts of pregnancy, and a detailed explanation of the events and routines to be expected both in the office and in the delivery room. In addition, it outlines the methods in use at Yale which in recent years have been heavily flavored with the advices of Grantly Dick Read. Emphasis is placed upon antenatal instruction to prospective mothers and fathers (this book might well serve as a manual for such a course), a series of exercises designed to enable the parturient to relax her muscles in labor so that the forces of nature may work more efficiently and with the production of less discomfort (excellent diagrams are included), rooming-in, and breast feeding. The book is written on the thesis that preparation for childbearing would convert an experience which is often disagreeable to one which is happy and emotionally satisfying to both the mother and the father of the newborn child. It presupposes that most of the disagreeable features of pregnancy and labor are due to fear (of the unknown and unfamiliar) which in turn leads to tension, which interferes with the efficiency of the body processes and leads to pain. It seeks to dispel fear by information and to supply an additional corrective for tension by teaching the art of relaxation.

Whether or not one subscribes to all of the routines suggested, the aims of the book are laudable, its tone is sympathetic and persuasive, and the information supplied is accurate and adequate without being wordy. (There are 168 pages.) It would be an excellent book to recommend to one's obstetrical patients.

My only criticism of the book is as follows: It tends to suggest that until the concept of "natural childbirth" came along, obstetrical practice was barbarous. The statement is made, "Pregnancy and labor still mean for most women nine long months of discomfort, followed by an experience which at best is extremely distasteful and at worst an ordeal." I do not believe that this is true and I feel that it may be harmful to plant this thought in the minds of the uninitiated. Many obstetricians who might otherwise like to use this book because of its numerous good qualities, might hesitate to do so because of this concept and because it might commit them to routines and practices which they do not employ.

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TOXAEMIAS OF PREGNANCY—Human and Veterinary. A Ciba Foundation Symposium. 93 illustrations. The Blackiston Company, Philadelphia, 1950. 280 pages. \$4.50.

This volume contains 26 original contributions presented a little over a year ago in London. Some are rather short notes, while others are quite comprehensive. Most of the articles are concerned with the specific toxemia of human pregnancy, but there are six dealing with pregnancy disorders in sheep or cows. These appear to be metabolic diseases such as hypocalcemia, ketosis or copper deficiency, and while they are of obvious importance in the field of veterinary medicine, they bear no resemblance to human toxemia and seem somewhat out of place in this symposium.

About half of the presentations dealing with toxemia of pregnancy in women are excellent, and for that reason alone the volume should be of interest to every obstetrician. The